

ramps around here for good ideas. There's a lot of trap doors for good ideas. But JERRY WELLER was tenacious and he was able to put together the coalitions. He was focused and he got that done, and today, millions of Americans have fundamentally benefited because of his tenacity and the political savvy with which he moved that through the House and ultimately through the Congress.

He had other successes as well, and that was the transformation of the Joliet arsenal in Illinois, and that was property that had not it been for his leadership in his district, it could have essentially gone by the wayside. But because he was tenacious and he was focused, it's been turned into a good thing.

So JERRY WELLER, we are going to miss you, and it is with regret that we're here tonight. But it is with a great deal of hope and optimism that we'll see you and your tenacity and the glint in your eye.

The other person that we're here to honor is also another member of that class, and that is Congressman RAY LAHOOD. Congressman LAHOOD has been described by Mr. SHIMKUS as a man of the House, and I kind of feel like he has the demeanor of sort of Dad coming home. When he would be in the Chair and the House would be raucous and a little bit spunky, he would gavel that down, and he was entrusted with the gavel during some of the most historic times.

And he is a man of history because he serves in the same seat that Abraham Lincoln served in. He's from the same hometown as another Illinois great, that is, Everett Dirksen. He served also at the side of Bob Michel, and these are great Illinoisans.

I'm pleased that now the Easter Seals of Peoria, Illinois, has chosen to honor Congressman LAHOOD and his bride by setting up the Ray and Kathy LaHood House for Children with Special Needs.

I think it's indicative of the type of person that he is, the type of integrity, the directness with which he interacts with his colleagues, and I know that that's great encouragement not only to me but I know it's great encouragement and a great example for all Americans.

So for these two men who have chosen to sacrifice so greatly and serve our State so well, I can tell you, Madam Speaker, that it is with a great deal of pride that I say it's been an honor to serve with Congressman WELLER. It's been an honor to serve with Congressman LAHOOD, and I look forward to our paths crossing many, many times in the future.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to honor the incredible service of my very good friend RAY LAHOOD. I have had the privilege of serving alongside him as a Member of the Conference and as an Appropriator.

I first met RAY when he was a young staffer for Bob Michel. He performed invaluable serv-

ice in helping Bob be a great leader. RAY's son Darin was looking for work and it was a pleasure to bring him into the extended Lewis family as a part of my personal office. With my encouragement, Darin went on to law school as an attorney in Nevada. I know I share RAY's pride as Darin has returned home to Illinois to run for Peoria County State's Attorney.

RAY is a consensus-builder and a common-sense legislator and has distinguished himself as a champion of this great institution. Throughout his time here he has fought vigorously to ensure the Capitol stays the "people's house" and that it remains a beacon for motivated and service-minded young people.

I know his constituents appreciate his selfless service. His efforts are a testament to the highest level of commitment an individual can demonstrate on behalf of others. I join my colleagues in wishing RAY, Kathy, and his family well.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the 5-minute Special Order of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is vacated.

There was no objection.

TRIBUTES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, at this time I do want to yield such time as he may consume to the man who has been talked about a great deal. If I didn't know better and didn't know him so well, I would say they've been exaggerating, but there has been no exaggeration, a great man, a great Representative. It's been an honor to serve with him.

I yield to JERRY WELLER of Illinois.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my good friend from Texas for sharing his time in giving me the opportunity to say thank you, not only thank you to my constituents but thank you to my colleagues, particularly those from the Illinois delegation who are here tonight, my friend DON MANZULLO and JOHN SHIMKUS and PETER ROSKAM for taking time to say a few nice things about RAY LAHOOD and myself, and for that I appreciate that so much. But also I want to say thank you for the partnership I've had with you as a member of the Illinois delegation over the 14 years that I've had the privilege of serving in this House.

You know, RAY LAHOOD's a good friend to all of us, and of course, I want to take a moment and just salute RAY LAHOOD who, as my colleagues in the delegation and all the Members of the House, both Republican and Democrat know, is a man who's a man of this institution, someone who's worked tirelessly to bring civility to the House, a man who led efforts to convene bipartisan retreats. Four House bipartisan

retreats were cochaired by RAY LAHOOD in his effort to bring civility and bipartisanship to the House. And I think if you can think of just one thing about RAY LAHOOD, it is his commitment and desire that the institution of this Congress should work together to solve the challenges that we have before us.

You know, I look back over the 14 years that I've had the privilege of serving in the House as a member of the House Ways and Means Committee and the opportunity I had to serve on the Foreign Affairs Committee and serve, of course, as a deputy whip. I think of those opportunities to get to know my colleagues and have an opportunity to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and I can't say a few words tonight without saying thank you to all the men and women that I've had the privilege of serving with, for the courtesies, for the opportunity to work together, and frankly, we had some good times as well in that process. I want to say thank you to everyone, and I also want to thank my colleagues for serving in this Congress.

You know, there's a lot of work that goes sight unseen. You don't often get thanked enough for the work that's done behind the scenes, but I want to thank my colleagues for their work and for their commitment to public service.

I also want to thank my colleagues for the support that you have given me in the projects and the legislation that I've had the opportunity to work on.

My friends mentioned the marriage tax penalty, which was an issue of fairness, and that issue came to me in my first campaign. I remember a young woman who came up, she was working in the office in my campaign, and she said, you know, JERRY, if you do get elected to Congress, there's an issue I want you to look into and I hope you will fix it. It's a penalty. If you're married, you're going to pay higher taxes.

She said, you know, my boyfriend and I, we want to get married. We both have pretty good jobs, and my friends said you better do your taxes jointly just to experiment and find out what your obligation would be. And they did that. They discovered they paid about \$1,400 more in higher taxes just if they got married.

□ 2130

And because it was clear to me that it was unfair and, frankly, wrong that you should pay higher taxes just because you're married, that doesn't seem right, it's wrong, that our Tax Code was punishing marriage; where if two people worked, and because when you marry you file jointly, your incomes were combined. And the way our complicated Tax Code was structured, 42 million married working couples across America were paying higher taxes, on average about \$1,400.

And I want to thank President Bush for signing into law my legislation eliminating the marriage tax penalty,

which, on average, saves married couples today \$1,900 that they otherwise would pay had we not successfully worked to bring greater simplicity to the tax code, and ensuring that our tax code essentially today is marriage neutral. Two married people who both are in the workforce, who file jointly because they're married, will not pay higher taxes than two people that aren't married, but with similar incomes and with similar status. And so, today, we've eliminated the marriage tax penalty.

Unfortunately, in 2011 that reform expires. And I would encourage my colleagues to make elimination of the marriage tax penalty permanent so that we can protect the most basic institution in our society from a financial penalty we all know as the marriage tax penalty.

I also want to thank my colleagues for the work that we did on working to protect children from Internet predators. With their support, we were able to pass the Internet Predator Protection Act. I want to thank my colleagues for the support you gave me in our effort to ensure that veterans would have a better opportunity to obtain health care locally. You know, traditionally, the Veterans Administration always provided health care through VA hospitals. But many of our veterans live in rural areas and ex-urban areas where they would have to drive great distances.

And so we worked—in fact, my colleague, DAVE WELDON, and I, he is a classmate—and he's retiring this year as well—we cosponsored legislation that for the first time gave the VA the authority to enter into a cooperative sharing agreement with local health care providers, like a local hospital, to open, essentially, an outpatient clinic in the local area where veterans can go and receive their outpatient care.

And one thing I noted, because today the La Salle Veterans Outpatient Clinic in La Salle, Illinois, is a perfect example of that; we have 45,000 veterans living within a 45-minute driving radius of La Salle. Many of the veterans that obtained health care there, it was the first time they were able to obtain health care because otherwise it was too inconvenient. They weren't able to travel all the way to Chicago to Hines Hospital.

So those efforts made a difference. And whether it was helping veterans or protecting kids from Internet predators, eliminating the marriage tax penalty, it took the support of my colleagues. And I want to thank all my colleagues for the support that you gave me in those efforts.

Some of my friends in the Illinois delegation referred to the Joliet Arsenal. And when I was elected to Congress, the Joliet Arsenal was a 24,000-acre surplus military facility during the Vietnam conflict, during World War II, and before. The vast majority of the TNT production for America's military was produced at the former

Joliet Arsenal. In the late seventies it was shut down. In the 1980s it was a rusting, essentially abandoned place. And the community came together and we worked with conservationists and business and labor, political leaders in both parties, a lot of volunteers, veterans, the environmental community, and we worked to put together a plan, a plan that was a win-win-win for the community. We took what was the largest single piece of property in Northern Illinois, created the Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie, a 19,000-acre conservation area, the first-ever tall grass prairie—now administered by the Forest Service—and the first of its kind, but also the largest today.

Essentially, we created what became as affectionately known by many as Will County Central Park. We doubled the amount of open space set aside for posterity in Will County with our legislation to redevelop the Joliet Arsenal.

We also created the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, which today, geographically, is the second largest national veterans cemetery named after Abraham Lincoln. Not only is Illinois the land of Lincoln, but we have to remember that the Gettysburg Address, made so famous by Abraham Lincoln, actually was the dedication of our Nation's first veterans cemetery. And so we thought it was appropriate to name the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery after the President who started the national cemetery system in order to honor, with dignity, those who risk and sacrifice their lives for our Nation.

We also set aside about 3,000 acres for the creation of jobs. And we were fortunate to recruit Center Point Properties, a Chicago-area firm. They partnered with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. And as a result of that partnership, private development attracted over \$1 billion in investment—creating jobs, creating what is one of the largest intermodal truck, rail, freight handling facilities. We've now had manufacturing, warehousing and distribution come there. Our farmers benefit because their grain goes to Asia through the terminal there at the former Joliet Arsenal. And almost 8,000 workers today are directly and indirectly employed as a result of that effort.

And it was a team effort, I'm so proud to say. And we can continue building on that effort to redevelop the Joliet Arsenal, creating the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, the Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie, and of course the two industrial sites that now have attracted over \$1 billion in investment.

You know, one of the areas that I've also enjoyed having the privilege of being involved in as a Member of this House was my belief that our economy grows, and manufacturing and farmers and workers, that all Americans benefit when we expand trade, when we increase the commerce between our Nation and others. You know, we're a Nation of 300 million people. We represent

4 percent of the globe's population. Ninety-six percent of the people who live on this Earth live outside of the United States. And I believe that our economy grows when we find a way to market services and produce products and manufactured goods and agricultural products that come from States like Illinois that I represent, having an opportunity to sell them overseas to foreign markets. It grows our economy and creates opportunities for our young people.

And trade today, if you look at economic figures, you look at the discussion we're having about the economy, this past quarter we had 3.3 percent economic growth. And if you analyze where that growth occurred, 90 percent of that growth came as a result of exports—whether it's yellow construction equipment made in Joliet or corn and soybeans grown in Illinois, our export markets growing this economy.

And a key part of that are the trade agreements that we passed in the last few years, particularly the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement, known as DR-CAFTA, the Chilean Agreement, the Peruvian-Chilean Trade Agreement, all good agreements that the opponents would say were going to cost us jobs, and actually today have generated tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of new jobs.

The DR-CAFTA agreement actually took a trade deficit with our six trading partners in Central America and the Dominican Republic, where we had a trade deficit prior to that agreement, and because it eliminated all sorts of barriers—particularly tariffs—on U.S. products and Illinois products, today we have a significant trade surplus with our DR-CAFTA partners.

Clearly, trade wins for States like Illinois as well as America. And that's why it's so important that we ratify the U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement, which, Colombia is a nation of 42 million people; it's the longest standing democracy in all of South America. It's recognized as America's best friend and best partner in all Latin America. But the population of Colombia is essentially equal to the population of all the DR-CAFTA nations combined. Tremendous opportunity.

My hope is that we will ratify this agreement before I leave Congress before the end of this year. And my hope is, as we look to the future on the issue of trade, that we can bring trade back to the middle again and continue moving forward to grow our economy and expand opportunities to sell U.S. products and grow our economy in agriculture and manufacturing, and of course give workers the opportunity for better jobs as a result of expanded exports.

Let me close by saying thank you to my family. You know, I remember when I was sworn into Congress 14 years ago, my mom and dad, Lavern and Marilyn Weller, came out, as did my Aunt Mary and Aunt Eileen, and

many friends and family came. I particularly want to say thank you to Mom and Dad, Lavern and Marilyn Weller, who worked so hard raising pure bred and Durock and Hampshire hogs, having many champions at various fairs, selling pure bred hogs all over the world.

And frankly, Mom and Dad taught me the value of trade. I remember when President Nixon opened up relations with China, the first shipment of hogs that were purchased by the Chinese included pigs from the Weller family farm. And of course after that, the result of the hard work of my mom and dad, they sold hogs to about 30 nations around the world. I'm very proud of that. In fact, they gave me the opportunity to be involved in 4-H and FFA. And I had the grand champion barrel at the Illinois State Fair my last year in 4-H. But it was all because of Mom and Dad and the opportunities they gave me, to go to the University of Illinois, to pursue a career off the farm, and of course to become involved in public service.

I look back at my campaigns. My mother was always my best campaigner. If you went to a JERRY WELLER campaign event, you would always see Marilyn Weller, my mom, right there, shaking everyone's hand, thanking them for coming. And she would always wear a big button that said, "I'm JERRY's mom." She was my best campaigner.

I want to thank my sister Pat and my brother Doug. We lost our brother Rod this past year, and he is now buried at the Abraham Lincoln Cemetery. And Rod and Doug and Pat were all part of the campaign as well, the support they gave me. And I can't go without saying thank you to my siblings.

And of course, as I close, I want to say thank you to my wife and my daughter. You know, when I came to Congress, I was a single guy. And who would have thought that as a result of coming to Congress I would meet my wife and fall in love and have a family today. And my wife and I, we have a very unique relationship. We're the only parliamentarians from two different countries who are married. My wife is a Member of Congress in the nation of Guatemala. She served in her Congress as long as I have, 14 years. And she's much younger. And frankly, she is a very skilled and dedicated legislator on her own, someone who I am so proud of the work that she does. But Zury Rios de Weller—as she is officially known as now—is a great partner, and she is a wonderful wife, and most important of all, she's a wonderful mother. Who would have thought that as a result of my opportunity to serve in Congress I would meet my wife and I would become a dad? And we have a 2-year-old girl, Marizu Catherine Weller Rios. Marizu is a very bright, happy, healthy little girl. And I am so very proud and so very fortunate to have Zury and Marizu in my life.

And as I look at what I'm going to be doing in the future, when I leave this

Congress, my first priority is to be a good husband and a good father. And I look forward to my years ahead with Zury and with Marizu and the opportunities that we'll have to do things together.

So many of my colleagues have said, you know, when I got elected to Congress, my kids were in diapers. And all of a sudden they're now in high school or they're now in college, and I haven't seen much of them. But what really caught my attention was, I was looking through the family photo albums, and I'm not in the photos—because I wasn't there, because I was attending meetings and functions everywhere else. Well, for me, I want to be with my daughter. I want her to see me at all our family functions. I want her to see her dad every day.

And people often ask, why do you want to leave Congress at age 51? It's because I was blessed at age 49 becoming a father for the first time. And my daughter, Marizu, is my one and only child. And I look forward to being her father in the years ahead, to being there, attending all her activities, hopefully being a good dad, but most of all, enjoying life with my wife and daughter.

Again, I want to say thank you to my colleagues in this Congress for the courtesies, the opportunities to work together. I want to thank especially my colleagues in the Illinois delegation for the partnership we've had, both Democrat and Republican, and for those who took time tonight to say some nice things about RAY LAHOOD and myself, since we're departing this Congress.

I particularly want to say thank you to JOHN SHIMKUS and DON MANZULLO and PETER ROSKAM for taking time to come to the floor to say some nice things. And for that, I want to say thank you, you're my friends.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is probably the last speech I will make on the floor of this House as a sitting Member of Congress. My hope is we will have a lame-duck session, but if we don't, this is my final address. Again, I want to say thank you very much.

□ 2145

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, we are going to miss the Honorable JERRY WELLER and do appreciate all he has done for this country, not just for the people of Illinois.

Well it is with great pleasure that I rise tonight to pay tribute to a constituent, a good friend, a former colleague, Judge Cynthia Stevens Kent, who will be retiring at the end of this year following 25 years of judicial service. So I wanted to make this tribute a part of the permanent CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that people in future generations would know of this great judge.

Throughout her years of faithful service to the State of Texas, Judge Kent has gained the respect and admiration of friends, colleagues and espe-

cially fellow judges. Her knowledge of the law and commitment to bettering the judiciary is not just well known in east Texas but throughout the country. East Texas has been blessed to have such a wise leader. And it's truly a better place to live because of her hard work.

After receiving her law degree from South Texas College of Law in Houston, Judge Kent moved to Tyler, Texas, with her husband, Don. She opened her own law firm, but in 1984 she left the lucrative practice to dedicate herself to public service. For 4 years she served as judge of the Smith County Court at Law Number Two. She oversaw misdemeanor criminal cases, workers' compensation cases, substantive civil cases, condemnation cases, mental health, probate, juvenile, family law and appeals from justice of the peace and municipal courts.

After 4 years in that capacity, Judge Kent was successfully elected as the first woman to serve on the Texas 114th Judicial District Court serving both Smith and Wood counties. As judge of this court, she has overseen felony criminal cases, divorce and family law, juvenile, land claims, election contests, very substantive civil cases, workers' compensation, contested probate matters, and juvenile law in general. She has diligently presided over this court for the past 20 years.

Now throughout her career, Judge Kent has established herself as a wise, hardworking, law and order judge. There is not much question about that. She has cleared a large backlog of cases while gaining a reputation among criminal defendants as a judge you wanted to avoid.

Judge Kent is widely known for her strong commitment to teaching and to furthering her own legal education. During her time on the bench, she received a masters of judicial studies from the National Judicial College, and she is currently working toward candidacy for a Ph.D. She served as a faculty instructor at the National Judicial College teaching "advanced evidence" and "handling capital cases." She has spoken and taught at countless judicial conferences, seminars and courses throughout the country, all the while dedicating herself to the east Texas community by serving as a volunteer instructor at Texas College in Tyler, Texas.

Judge Kent has written and co-authored numerous publications, and she has served on a variety of boards and associations. Most recently she was chosen by Governor Rick Perry to be a member of the Governor's Criminal Justice Advisory Council which is tasked with the difficult job of reviewing the criminal laws in Texas. It's undeniable that Judge Kent has distinguished herself as one of the Nation's leading judicial scholars.

Throughout all of the many demands of her professional career, Judge Kent has managed to raise a wonderful family with the love and support of her

husband, Don Kent. The Kents have been married for over 32 years and have three sons, Drew, Jarad and Wayne.

Judge Kent's dedication and commitment to God, her family, the law and to faithfully serving east Texas is evident not just from the accomplishments already mentioned, but from the admiration and kind words of almost anyone across the region. She has been a wise judge, a dependable colleague, a patient instructor and a dear friend whose leadership has been an inspiration to so very many. Whether you agreed or disagreed with her, you never wondered where she stood. "Shy and withdrawn" were never adjectives used in the same sentence with her name.

During my years as a judge, I served at the opposite end of the courthouse on the same hall, same floor. It was always such a comfort to know that as difficult questions arose on exceedingly complex and even life-and-death cases, I had a knowledgeable friend whose judgment and advice could be trusted at the other end of the hall. All it took was a walk down the hall to her office or she to mine for an insightful, methodical discussion of the law to arrive at a proper solution. I was always in awe of just how amazing she was at multitasking like no one I had ever seen. She is truly an extraordinary person.

Judge Kent is to be congratulated for her so many years of dedicated service, and now with retirement, she should be thanked for her committed devotion to the people of east Texas. My condolences on the other hand also have to go out to Smith County residents on the loss of such a dedicated jurist.

May God bless Judge Cynthia Stevens Kent and all of the work that she has done.

Now Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to yield such time as he may consume to my friend from Illinois, Mr. JOHN SHIMKUS. We have been in a financial crisis, we're told, and my friend, JOHN SHIMKUS, has been talking about something that could have avoided the whole problem.

And I would yield such time as he may consume.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Well, thank you, Judge. You're a friend and a colleague, someone that helps us share a laugh and a joke. We also know of your powerful oratory ability when things need to be said. I don't know if I have seen you so emotionally engaged in this tribute to your colleague and friend. I think that is probably one of the best tributes you can give someone. So it was noticed by me. And I know it was noticed by your colleague. And I know she appreciates it.

I'm going to take a few minutes just to tie two things together. We had this great financial crisis. This financial crisis is based upon two events. One is the subprime financial mortgage issue that has worked its way through Wall Street. The other one is high energy prices. And these two things have really put a damper on the economy.

We've had some great successes in this Congress with this CR that just passed. After a good couple of months about fighting over the oil and natural reserves in this country, we won. The OCS moratorium has been lifted, and the moratorium on oil shale has been lifted.

Now what am I talking about? I'm talking about that we, as legislators, especially on the Outer Continental Shelf, which are these areas here, the red, since 1982, we said we're not going to allow any Federal money to be spent to lease areas for exploration and recovery of oil and gas, thus depriving the country of the revenues from those areas and depriving those countries from the jobs that would be created. And so we, with the consistent drumbeat, have, for this time, for this short time, have won that fight. Also here, we see three mountain States in which we also put off-limits recovery exploration of oil shale. Oil shale can be turned into liquid fuels. We said we're not going to allow any Federal money to be spent to allow that to happen. In the continuing resolution, these moratoriums were taken off the books so that now, we know it still takes years, the Federal Department of Mines and Minerals are going to have to go through the regulation and accept the request and do that action, but at least these things can start. And when we're exploring for oil and gas and starting to recover that, we're using oil shale to turn into fuel, we've got a couple of things happen. We bring on more supply.

Now I'm not one that says we're going to drive prices down to prices that they were a year, a year and a half ago. But I will say what we do want to do at a minimum is stabilize energy prices. And hopefully we can drive them down. But we do need to stabilize them, because the middle class, the poor and rural America are those who are hurt the most by high energy prices. And it hurts our ability to buy goods and services, and it depresses our economy.

It didn't take very long for the ink to dry on the CR, the continuing resolution, when rumors started coming out from the Democratic leadership saying, we were just joking, as soon as we come back, we're going to replace that moratorium on the Outer Continental Shelf, thus depriving us of the oil and gas in those areas and depriving us of those revenues that can be generated to help grow our economy. So I'm just putting my friends on the other side on notice. We're going to do what we did in this Congress next Congress. And we're going to hold them accountable. And we're not going to allow them to take these areas that we have now opened and open it and allow them to use it for this political short period of time to get re-elected and then come back here and close it. If they think they had a fight this year, wait until next year. We are going to sharpen our swords, and we're going to be ready to

come back. And I think it's going to be much more difficult for them to make the case that they should close these areas up.

So I want to come down here tonight, obviously a great competitor in the political arena and public policy is the majority leader, STENY HOYER. Actually most of us really like the majority leader. But his quotes today say, we're going to do this first order of business, we're going to close these areas up. And to the majority leader, I just say, we're ready to go and fight for this in the long haul because it will be good for jobs and the economy and lowering the energy costs for average Americans.

So Judge GOHMERT, I appreciate your allowing me to share some of your time tonight. I look forward to the conclusion of this Congress. And I'm even looking more expectantly to the next Congress as we try to continue to use all our natural resources that we have. We won on OCS. We won on oil shale. We have a long way to go on coal. We still have the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We have great places that we can recover oil, gas and coal and make this country more energy independent. And I know with your help we're going to be able to that.

Mr. GOHMERT. Would the gentleman be willing to engage in a colloquy?

Mr. SHIMKUS. I would be honored to engage in a colloquy.

Mr. GOHMERT. Here we have been hearing so much about the financial crisis, and the Secretary of the Treasury has said that we need \$700 billion to bail out Wall Street. He doesn't use those words. It's so ironic. We've been hearing Boone Pickens talk about \$700 billion. But he has been talking about the massive transfer of wealth from the United States to countries, many of whom don't like us, where we're buying their oil, when we could be producing our own if the majority would just let us do so.

So when we talk about a financial crisis, and we talk about that influx of \$700 billion being spent on American energy and American jobs being created, because I know you and I have talked about it before, and you haven't touched on it tonight about the effect of that \$700 billion being spent on our shores in ANWR. Do you want to touch on that?

Mr. SHIMKUS. Well I do want to highlight the fact everybody talks about the trade deficit, and what is the biggest impact on the trade deficit is our purchasing of energy from foreign countries, especially in this era of high energy prices. This \$700 billion number that you're referring to is a transfer of wealth from Americans to some of our friends, Canadians, they are our largest importer. We import from them. They are a large exporter of energy to us, and Mexico, but we also transfer our wealth to places where we're not sure about our relationship. We know Venezuela is not our friend. We have an interesting relationship with Saudi Arabia. One day we're close, and the next

day they may be funding our enemies. They fund our enemies through oil revenues that we're paying.

There is a better way. And that is to become more energy independent. And what I like about this debate, and I think you are alluding to it a little bit, is when we are recovering oil and gas and oil shale and I would say coal in other places, the government receives royalty payments for that exploration.

□ 2200

Congressman BARTON, the ranking member now of Energy and Commerce, has proposed, hey, if we are going to have to do this great outlay of money to stabilize the economy, we have a place we can go for revenues. Great idea. Let's have a pay-for. These would be great pay-fors.

Now, that hasn't really been resolved in this debate, but I still have always historically on the floor talked about the jobs that are created when you look for, find and then recover oil and gas in the OCS and the oil shale. And, of course, I am talking about that because that was part of the continuing resolution. Those are the provisions.

In fact, the majority leader of the Senate in the CR wanted to strip this portion out. In fact, he is trying right now, to say, oh, the House was wrong. They shouldn't have eased the moratorium on oil shale. I want to put that back on.

I don't think he is going to be successful. But the fact that in the Senate they want to do that and in the House they are talking already about doing the OCS, what does that do for the average consuming citizen of this country, and what signal does it send to the futures markets? It says, well, is the government serious about opening supply, or are we not?

We Republicans are serious about an all-American energy policy that brings in all our natural resources. Are our friends on the other side just playing a cruel joke on the country, saying yeah, we said so now, but, man, wait until January. We are just going to take it right back. I hope it is not a cruel joke, because it will cost my constituents a boatload of money, our schools, our hospitals, our jobs.

Again, we need to continue the fight that we started early this spring, through the summer, through the end of this Congress.

Mr. GOHMERT. Looking at the map that the gentleman from Illinois had prepared, it is ironic to me. Like up in New England, we see the area that is off limits for drilling. Well, it is not that New Englanders are against drilling the Outer Continental Shelf. In fact, apparently they are 100 percent for it, as long as it moves up the coast just a little bit and our friends from Canada drill right off of their part of the coast. Then our friends from Canada, as the gentleman has indicated, are gracious enough to pop it back down and sell it to us.

Now, I don't know if those sands under the Outer Continental Shelf are

such that those formations, that pool is actually draining some of our oil that they are selling back to us, or our gas and selling it back to us. But if so, that is awfully gracious of them to do so, to sell us back some of our own oil and gas.

Then we have people saying under no circumstances whatsoever do we ever want any drilling done less than 50 miles off our coast. Well, you look at Florida, the map that you have got there, you see Cuba, they are 90 miles from the Florida coast, which nowadays under international law most countries claim 200 miles out, except where you share an area like that, in which case you split it.

So now Cuba is being kind enough to other countries, whether it is Russia, China, Venezuela, to allow them to come drill within 50 miles of the Florida coast, and, who knows, maybe they will be willing to sell us back some of our own oil and gas too for an appropriate profit going to those countries. But how ironic. They say they are against it, but it is not really being against it. It is just in our little backyard area.

I was amazed as the gentleman was talking about the arguments that have been made for some months, and I have got to say, I thank the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. SHIMKUS, who has been the leader on this issue and been terrific about it. JOHN PETERSON from Pennsylvania, we are going to miss him. He has been a great leader in discussing energy.

But as we talked about it through August, RALPH REGULA came and spoke one day on the floor without the mikes and with the lights dimmed. I did not know until Mr. REGULA pointed it out, he was on Resources back in 1981, and, of course, President Carter had signed an executive order. And in that order, and RALPH had that as well, he had said that the Outer Continental Shelf was such a vast great resource for energy for America, and the two words that stuck in my mind in President Carter's order was that it should be "developed expeditiously."

Well, according to RALPH, they got lobbied in 1981 by wealthy beachfront property owners on the California coast. They didn't want to see a platform out there within their sunset. They lobbied hard and eventually they won. Okay, we will give California a moratorium on drilling off their coast.

According to RALPH, immediately Florida beachfront landowners, the wealthy, not the poor and the down-trodden, not the hardest working in America, but the wealthy beachfront property owners, and I am proud of them, I am glad they are able to do that, they came rushing in. Wait a minute, you gave a moratorium to the wealthy beachfront property owners in California. We need to have one in Florida. So, they lobbied hard enough, had the wherewithal, the money to do a good job lobbying, and they got a moratorium.

And RALPH said, he said when they gave the moratorium to California, the committee will rue the day we ever did it, because that was 27 years ago. Then Florida got theirs. Then other States started coming in and saying, you gave it to California and Florida, we ought to get one too. That is where that came from.

Of course, in Texas, pretty pragmatic, we heard lots of horror stories. If you put platforms out there, it will kill all the aquatic life. You will never get another shrimp or fish out of the gulf.

Lo and behold, we have the platforms out there. They withstood category 5 hurricanes as far as not leaking. Some of them were destroyed, but they still didn't leak. And I kind of thought it looked pretty, you know. The sun sets, and out there you start seeing lights twinkling on the horizon, it is platforms. I know I am getting energy from it, and it is a whole lot better than having tankers come along and leak.

I was amazed, and that came because of the discussion we had with the lights dimmed, the microphones off, and RALPH REGULA giving us a little bit of history.

Mr. SHIMKUS. I was here that day also. And, of course, we honored RALPH tonight at an earlier special order where the delegation from Ohio was here, and that is the benefit of having Members who have served a long time. They help keep the whole debate in perspective. The new Members are firebrands, want to change the world, and that is good. We need all sorts. We will miss the RALPH REGULAS of the world.

But he wanted to come back. He wanted to participate in this debate, because he knew the history of this. Sometimes you think, oh, it is just the young firebrands. But he knew what we were doing, and because he had experienced the story you just told, he said I wanted to be part of that, because I want to set the record straight of what happened and why, and why we need to use this great resource that we have available for our energy security and for jobs and the economy.

Mr. GOHMERT. I appreciate the input, the insights. This deals with the energy issue, but it deals with the financial crisis in America. As the gentleman alluded to, this has helped contribute to a perfect storm in America for a financial crisis. But we are not hearing people on the other side of the aisle, and we haven't heard Secretary Paulson say, you know what, that kind of infusion of wealth could really boost the country, and then you wouldn't have to worry about bailing out the greediest among us that were on Wall Street and drove some companies into the dirt. Instead, what we have heard is we have got to spend \$700 billion to build this governmental entity that will start managing assets.

Now, I think the world of the President. I think history is going to be good to him. He is an honorable, noble man. The biggest problem he has I

think is what Jeff Foxworthy says about people that speak with a southern accent; people hear the accent and immediately deduct 50 IQ points from how smart they think you are.

He is much smarter than people give him credit for. But he has listened to people like Secretary Paulson and others who have told him it is all gloom or all doom, and then has come before us and he said last night only the Federal Government could be patient enough to manage these assets.

I immediately thought, in the Resources Committee 2 years ago, in the last Congress, we put in a biomass incentive program where we would incentivize people to help create this alternative energy source. People bought into that, like we wanted them to, and they started building biomass plants. And when they are about to come on line, this Congress in the Resources Committee comes back and knocks that out. They say, no, we are not going to do that incentive program anymore. We are going to spend several million dollars to study, to see whether it is really feasible. Of course it was feasible. People relied on the government's promise that they would have an incentive, and then we yanked it out from under them.

So when I hear somebody say how patient the Federal Government is, we can't even keep the same tax incentives in place for 2 years so that people can take advantage of them. They know they would have trouble trusting the Federal Government.

Then I can also tell you as former outside counsel for the RTC and FDIC, I can't go into individual cases, but it is public knowledge and you can talk to anybody who ever dealt with the RTC or FDIC, when people knew the government owned an asset and they were needing to sell it, even if they could sit on it for a number of years, they always knew if the government owns it, we can pay less and get away with paying less than if a private entity owned it. They knew that.

The same way, if the government was going to buy it, they knew they should hold up the Federal Government, because eventually they would get what they want, and that is just the way it works. The private sector is the better place.

We have had some people who were greedy and ran these things into the ground. This Congress previously, as Congressman FRANK and Senator DODD, forced requirements on lending that caused them to make loans to people that couldn't repay them. We have had questions arise now as to potentially many of those loans may have been to illegal aliens, or, as they say in Great Britain, irregular migrants. But there is an accountability issue, and Congress has not done a good job of holding these people accountable, and that needs to start.

I am working on a bill, and some people are not real crazy about it, but there needs to be accountability. In the

public sector, publicly traded businesses, there is a concept in contract law called the corporate veil. So if you are acting as an officer of a corporation and you commit some act of negligence, the corporation can be sued, but not pierce the corporate veil to go after the officer because he was acting on behalf of the corporation, unless you could prove he was acting outside that course and scope with the corporation. Then you might pursue him personally.

I would like to see if an officer makes decisions that a reasonable and prudent officer would not have made under the same or similar circumstances, and it is one of the or a proximate cause towards the demise, the bankruptcy, the insolvency of the corporation that is publicly traded, then perhaps there should be no corporate shield, and in the bankruptcy court the bankruptcy judge could look at the assets of that officer and make a determination legally, was this negligence, was it a proximate cause for the insolvency or bankruptcy, and, if so, let's bring those millions back you got from your golden parachute and put them back in the employee pension fund or to help some of the debts that you ran up before you left them high and dry.

There are things we can do. I am not getting a lot of traction on talking to friends on that, but, who knows? We may get them back.

We heard this morning that China banks have been told by their government not to make loans, one-day loans to U.S. banks, because they are concerned about their solvency. It is amazing that China would need to teach us a lesson about capitalism.

But I do thank my friend from Illinois. I appreciate your participation and insights into energy, because it is such a huge part of the solution to our financial crisis. So I thank you.

I was intrigued when a number of our Members went over to China 3 years ago. We talked to a number of CEOs about why you moved your company, why you moved your facilities, your plant, to China.

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I figured the answer would be solely, well, it was just cheap labor. But the number one reason was that their corporate tax was half of what our corporate tax is in the United States. Then not only that, but China was willing to negotiate even lower taxes for a period of time to incentivize their coming to China.

Then you talk to them further, China has had some very polluted bodies of water, some of them were told if you will come and set your factory up on this body of water that's totally polluted, start using the water from that body, put it back clean, then we will cut you a better deal on corporate tax, and that it was well worth it for them to take advantage of that. So China was using corporations to help clean up their environment that they had made such a mess.

Having been an exchange student to the Soviet Union back in 1973, I am quite familiar with the fact that over there, any money that was paid was supposed to go into the Federal Government. That was socialism. Then everybody got a check got a check from this central government. That's how socialism worked.

I didn't realize, until I went to China, they don't do it that way. The Chinese do have a totalitarian government, and it's cause for great concern, but they have also noticed that in Hong Kong, and around the country, if you incentivize entrepreneurship and just take a part of that success, you make a whole lot more money than if you just make everybody bring in to the central coffers and then split it up equally.

That didn't work in the New Testament, when the New Testament Church tried. It ultimately resulted in the Apostle Paul saying, if you don't work, you don't eat.

It didn't work when the pilgrims did it. When they came to America they had a compact that they just bring into the central storehouse and then divided up equally. But then that ended up causing people, pilgrims, to notice, well, I am killing myself working here, and he is not working as hard I am, and he is getting the same amount, so they quit working.

I will never forget going to a collective farm, outside of Kiev, and I spoke just enough Russian back in those days when I could ask a question. I was intrigued because it was midmorning, around 10 a.m. or so, and there were a bunch of farmers sitting around in the shade.

I asked, you know, when do you work? Anybody that's worked on a farm back in east Texas or in west, anywhere in Texas, knows if you are going to work out there, you get up early, and you do everything you can as early as you can, because it starts getting hot. It was the same way there. I said, when do you work in Russia, and they laughed. One of the men, and I am not sure how many rubles he said, but he said, I make the same number of rubles if I am here in the shade or out there in the sun, so I am here in the shade.

That's why socialism doesn't work, and that's why, when we had this proposal from Secretary Paulson to have the government seize this massive amount of assets and then manage them for years and years, we could see this is the biggest step towards socialism that we could have ever imagined in this country, couldn't believe it was being proposed by our administration.

It's still unbelievable to me. We know the principles. As I have said before, I started making speeches in junior high and in debates in high school talking about the free market and entrepreneurship. If you set the American spirit free, it's amazing what they could do.

Now they want to come in and have me say that that was all a lie? I don't

believe it was a lie. I believe the government makes sure everybody has a level playing field, punish the wrongdoers, punish the evildoers, but then keep that level field available out there to play on, and then let entrepreneurship reign.

That's the best way to go. That's not what's proposed here, so there was a bunch of others. We had a plan that we proposed in the Republican Study Committee that would cut capital gains, cut income tax or anybody that will come in and buy these assets.

Boy, you think about that, we would stir up the market, get them excited about coming in and making money. It would be fantastic. We wouldn't have to create this huge bureaucracy to do that. It just comes back again to the USSR that lasted 70 years, because it was doomed to failure, couldn't stand, versus the free market.

You look at Ireland. I was talking to somebody from Ireland, and I understood them to say their corporate tax was 12 percent, China 17 percent, we are double that. France and Germany saw the way Ireland has become, I believe, the fourth fastest-growing country in the world, as companies are flocking in there, more jobs, better standard of living.

France and Germany, who had been tending towards socialism are now realizing, whoa, if we will just cut our taxes, then people will flock into here like they are into Ireland and like they have been into China to do business.

Now, I appreciated my friend, Mr. MCCOTTER, pointing out that Secretary Paulson could end up with a piece of paper, he was hoping to come away from their discussions today, come out, wave a piece of paper in front of the cameras, say we have this agreement, and this means fleece in our time, because Americans taxpayers would not be well served.

I appreciate my time is about to expire, and I appreciate the time tonight to talk about these issues, but there has got to be accountability. I believe you will have full cooperation in making people fully accountable on both sides of the aisle, but let's don't turn \$700 billion of the economy over to the government. Let's incentivize good conduct. Let's incentivize the free market at work because socialism doesn't.

I yield back and appreciate this opportunity.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. ARCURI) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KAGEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOLT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SALI) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MCCOTTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCHENRY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PENCE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GOHMERT, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MANZULLO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHIMKUS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ROSKAM, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1276. An act to facilitate the creation of methamphetamine precursor electronic log-book systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

S. 2840. An act to establish a liaison with the Federal Bureau of Investigation in United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to expedite naturalization applications filed by members of the Armed Forces and to establish a deadline for processing such applications; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

S. 3550. An act to designate a portion of the Rappahannock River in the Commonwealth of Virginia as the "John W. Warner Rapids"; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

S. 3560. An act to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide additional funds for the qualifying individual (QI) program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, September 26, 2008, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

8638. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — National Animal Identification System; Use of 840 Animal Identification Numbers for U.S.-Born Animals Only [Docket No. APHIS-2008-0077] (RIN: 0579-AC84) received September 18, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8639. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Department of Agri-

culture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tuberculosis; Amend the Status of California From Accredited Free to Modified Accredited Advanced [Docket No. APHIS-2008-0067] received September 18, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8640. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pesticides; Food Packaging Treated with a Pesticide [EPA-HQ-OPP-2006-0175; FRL-8382-3] received September 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8641. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pendimethalin; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0405; FRL-8368-8] received September 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8642. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter to report a violation of the Antideficiency Act, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

8643. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting an amendment to the list of payment-in-kind (PIK) projects required by U.S. Army Europe, pursuant to Public Law 101-510, section 2921; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8644. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's 2008 Report to Congress on Sustainable Ranges, pursuant to Section 366 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8645. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Assessment of Fees [Docket No. OCC-2008-0013] (RIN: 1557-AD06) received September 19, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8646. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Transactions Between Member Banks and Their Affiliates: Exemption for Certain Securities Financing Transactions Between a Member Bank and an Affiliate [Regulation W; Docket No. R-1330] received September 25, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8647. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — COMMISSION GUIDANCE AND REVISIONS TO THE CROSS-BORDER TENDER OFFER, EXCHANGE OFFER, RIGHTS OFFERINGS, AND BUSINESS COMBINATION RULES AND BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP REPORTING RULES FOR CERTAIN FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS [RELEASE NOS. 33-8957; 34-58597; FILE NO. S7-10-08] (RIN: 3235-AK10) received September 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8648. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Employment Standards, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's annual report to Congress on the FY 2005 operations of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

8649. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Household Eligibility and Application Process of the Coupon Program for Individuals Residing in Nursing Homes, Intermediate Care Facilities, Assisted Living Facilities and Households that Utilize Post Office Boxes [Docket